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That art which is filled with a moral idea is not superior in itself to sensual art. But since it produces more general and beneficial effects it is more complete. Entirely sensual art is hardly intellectual; on the contrary, moral art is all thought, sentiment, ideal. It is as great a folly to say that art pacifies all subjects as to affirm, as do certain writers of the passing diabolic school, that one should be immoral intentionally. But one can be sure that a sensual excitation becomes singularly attenuated when it is produced under the form of a noble work of art.

Let us not fear to go to the bottom of things; definitively then, art solicits only one form of sensuality, sexual sensuality. But this only the baser stage of love.³⁴

As soon as sexual love reaches its integral development it creates the family. Love of children is one of the agents of sociability, for society is necessary in order to protect them. Thus sexuality is the first stage of the social life and consequently of morality. This great horror of sensuality in art presents I scarcely know what that is morbid!—the final agony of that Christian mysticism which at times constrains us still. But is not that a singular prudishness which proscribes the nudities of art in a society which tolerates, entertains and protects thousands of prostitutes? Surely a whole people of nude statues would offend far less the purity of eyes and souls!

But it is necessary to regard sensuality from still another aspect. It is not an indifferent element in the æsthetic development of the individual. Pleasure is a bait and moral culture uses that bait. It is the entirely sensual enjoyment of pure form that renders the mind capable of enjoying pure idea, and it is the joy in the pure idea which rises to that

Note 34.—At the last analysis is not sexual sensuality the vulgar criterion which distinguishes the good from the beautiful? The people consider as good whatever helps to insure the conservation of beings; the people call beautiful whatever solicits or contributes to reproduction; the flower is merely an organ of generation.

delicate and wise voluptuousness of the moral action in which the endeavor of the soul toward the beautiful culminates.³⁵

Art is not all there is of beauty. It only occupies a corner of that infinite realm. Even if art should succumb under the anathemas of hypocritical prudishness or intolerant beliefs, beauty would none the less remain the most tangible and loftiest form of morality and the purest ideal of existence. It is not in the power of any doctrine to divest a good action of the æsthetic value and break the indissoluble harmony of the good and the beautiful. What difference does it make if art in its entirety and all nature should attack morality? One fact is ascertained, indisputable, decisive; there, where no beauty is, there is no morality either!

As to art, was it not an ardent spiritualist, Cousin, who wrote these lines "Art by itself is essentially moral and religious, for unless it would admit failure of its own law, its own proper genius, it everywhere expresses in its works eternal beauty"? Every work of art, he also said, raises the soul toward the infinite. That emotion which produces the beautiful turns the soul in the same direction; it is this beneficent emotion that art produces for humanity.

Yes, of a certainty, beneficent and likewise profoundly educational. And it is beneath that new aspect that we shall now consider the æsthetic emotion.³⁶

Note 35.—Just exactly because beauty takes hold of us through the senses, because it exerts an immediate action on our physiological constitution, art has been called upon to play in moral pathology a rôle still difficult to determine, but a sure one. Medicine has already obtained some astonishing cures from music. Hygienists in future will go much farther, no doubt, and will suppress or attenuate by the culture of æsthetic emotions both madness and the criminal instincts.

Note 36.—Moral or not, a work of art is neither more nor less artistic. This point once gained, one ought to affirm that æsthetic art includes a certain transformation of artistic inspiration; at any rate, it implies new directions for art and these will be moral and social directions.

To be continued.

LITTLE BLACK SAMMY

Move ovah, honey,
Wha'd you mean
Takin' up all de room in de bed?
Hyeah come mammy
Clean tired to de bone,
Whah she gwine to lay huh hed?

Little pink nightie
Wif ribbon run in,
Jes' plum matches
Dat little black skin;
Move ovah, honey,
Wha'd you mean
Takin' up all the room in de bed?

Little eyes stirrin' an' open'n wide,
Cain't you see you's
Ovah on mammy's side?
Hyeah what he say,
My little black Sammy:
"Jes gittin' a place
All wahm fer mammy."

David Blair Scott